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Listing of the Claims

1. (Original): A process for improved performance in at least one fuel cell, having a loss in power output of at least 5% of an initial power output, wherein the fuel cell comprises a cathode, an anode, an anode chamber, a cathode chamber, a fuel comprising an anolyte that flows through the cell, and a catholyte gas, wherein the fuel cell is connected to an external load, and wherein the process comprises:

- (a1) taking the load off the fuel cell; and
- (a2) applying an external electric field from an external power source to the fuel cell to reverse electrochemical reactions until at least 5.0% of the lost power output is regained.
- 2. The process of claim 1 wherein the applying an electric field from an external power source to the fuel cell to reverse electrochemical reactions occurs by, either:
- (a2a) cycling between a minimum voltage and a maximum voltage applied to the fuel cell until a maximum current is reached;
- (a2b) cycling between a minimum current and a maximum current applied to the fuel cell until a minimum voltage is reached;
- (a2c) applying an alternating voltage (AC voltage) until a maximum current is reached;
- (a2d) applying an alternating current until a maximum voltage is reached across the fuel cell;
- (a2e) applying a constant voltage until a maximum current is reached; or
 - (a2f) applying a constant current until a minimum voltage is reached.
- 3. (Original): The process of claim 1 wherein the power source is selected from the group consisting of batteries, capacitors, solar cells, and another fuel cell.
 - 4. (Original): The process of claim 1 wherein the fuel cell is a direct feed fuel cell.
 - 5. (Original) :The process of claim 4 wherein the fuel is in the liquid or vapor phase.
 - 6. (Original) The process of claim 5 wherein the fuel is an alcohol or an ether.
 - 7. (Original) :The process of claim 6 wherein the alcohol is methanol or ethanol.

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8. (Original): The process of claim 6 wherein the ether is diethyl ether.

- 9. (Original): The process of claim 1 wherein at least 25% of the lost power output is recovered.
- 10. (Original) :The process of claim 9 wherein at least 50% of the lost power output is recovered.
- 11. (Currently Amended) :The process of claim 2 wherein the voltage was cycled between about 0 V and about 2.3 V.
- 12. (Original) :The process of claim 2 wherein the current was cycled between about 0 to about 2 A/cm².
- 13. (Currently Amended): The process of claim 2 wherein the AC voltage amplitude is about 0 to about 3V 3V per cell, and the frequency is about 16 to about 500 Hz.
- 14. (Original): The process of claim 2 wherein the AC current amplitude is about 0 to about 2 A/cm² root mean squares (rms), and the frequency is about 16 to about 500 Hz.
- 15. (Original): The process of claim 1 wherein before step (a2), the process further comprises:
- (b) clearing the fuel cell of any liquid present therein to achieve a resistance of at least about 10% higher than the value before clearing the cell of any liquid; and
 - (c) starting the flow of anolyte through the fuel cell.
- 16. (Original): The process of claim 15 wherein the clearing of the fuel cell of any liquid present therein is achieved by:
 - (b1) stopping the flow of anolyte through the fuel cell; and
- (b2) providing a continuous flow of catholyte gas through the fuel cell for at least 30 seconds;
 - 17. (Original): The process of claim 15 further comprising:
 - (d) oxidizing the residual fuel in the fuel cell.
- 18. (Original): The process of claim 17 wherein oxidizing the residual fuel in the fuel cell is achieved by breaking the electrical connection between the cathode and anode.
- 19. (Original): The process of claim 17 wherein oxidizing the residual fuel in the fuel cell is achieved by applying a constant voltage in the range of about 0.005 V to about 0.8 V per cell.

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20. (Original): The process of claim 15 wherein before step (c), the anode chamber is purged with air.

- 21. (Original): The process of claim 15 wherein before step (c), the anode chamber is purged with nitrogen.
- 22. (Original): The process of claim 15 wherein after step (a1) the anode chamber of the fuel cell is purged with water.
- 23. (Original): The process of claim 17 wherein before step (c) the anode chamber of the fuel cell is purged with air.
- 24. (Original): The process of claim 15 wherein the before step (c), the cathode chamber is purged with air.
- 25. (Original): The process of claim 20 wherein the cathode chamber is purged with air.
- 26. (Original): The process of claim 24 or 25 wherein the cathode chamber is purged with air for at least 10 seconds.
- 27. (Original): The process of claim 24 wherein the anode chamber is purged with air after the cathode chamber is purged.
- 28. (Original): The process of claim 24 wherein the anode chamber is purged with nitrogen after the cathode chamber is purged.
- 29. (Original): The process of claim 27 wherein the air comprises exhaust air from the cathode chamber.
- 30. (Original): The processes of claim 27, 28, or 29 wherein the anode chamber is purged for about 2-15 minutes.
- 31. (Original): The processes of claim 30, wherein the anode chamber is purged for about 5-15 minutes.
- 32. (Original): The processes of claim 31, wherein the anode chamber is purged for about 10-15 minutes.
- 33. (Original): The process of claim 15 wherein the resistance reached is at least about 20% higher than the value before clearing the cell of any liquid.
- 34. (Original): The process of claim 33 wherein the resistance reached is about 100 to about 500% higher than the value before clearing the cell of any liquid.
 - 35. (Original): The process of claim 1 wherein fuel cells are in a stack.
 - 36. (Original): The process of claim 15 wherein fuel cells are in a stack.
 - 37. (Original): The process of claim 17 wherein fuel cells are in a stack.